

Message Text

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TAGS: PARM US UK UR
SUBJECT: CTB NEGOTIATIONS: POLITICAL WORKING GROUP
MEETING, FEBRUARY 1, 1978

CTB MESSAGE 113

1. POLITICAL WORKING GROUP HELD FIRST MEETING ON FEB 1
TO CONSIDER WAYS OF ORGANIZING FUTURE WORK. US ALTERNATE
REP (NEIDLE) STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING PATTERN
OF REAL PROGRESS THAT HAD BEEN ACHIEVED BY CONFRONTING
DIFFICULT ISSUES FIRST RATHER THAN BY CONCENTRATING ON
LESSER NON-CONTENTIOUS ISSUES WHERE MOVEMENT COULD CREATE
A MISLEADING IMPRESSION. PRINCIPAL CRITICAL AND PRIORITY
AREAS WERE, IN US VIEW, DURATION OF WEAPONS BAN AND
LINKAGE OF PNE BAN WITH WEAPONS BAN. EACH SIDE'S
POSITIONS WERE WELL KNOWN, BUT US DEL CONSIDERED IT WAS
UP TO SOVIET SIDE TO TELL US IF THEY HAD SOME NEW IDEAS
WHICH WOULD REPRESENT MOVEMENT TOWARD HAVING A STABLE
AND DURABLE TREATY. WE HAD GIVEN SOVIETS LANGUAGE IN OUR
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DECEMBER KEY ELEMENTS PAPER, WHICH WAS CONSISTENT WITH
THIS OBJECTIVE. NATURALLY, WE WOULD BE PLEASED IF SOVIETS
COULD ACCEPT OUR PROPOSALS. BUT IF, AS THEY SAID EARLIER,
THEY COULD NOT, THEN THE US DEL WAS READY TO LISTEN TO
ANY NEW SUGGESTIONS WHICH THE SOVIET DEL MIGHT WANT TO
EXPLORE. WE FELT THAT IT WAS UP TO THE SOVIETS TO MOVE
ON THESE KEY ISSUES. ON OTHER LESSER ISSUES, WE WOULD BE

PREPARED TO SEE WORK PROCEED ALSO, BECAUSE WE WANTED THE MAXIMUM FORWARD MOVEMENT ON ALL FRONTS. BUT THIS WAS ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT WE WOULD CONCURRENTLY BE MAKING PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES AS WELL.

2. ACTING UK REP (EDMONDS) EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR US APPROACH. SOVIET ALTERNATE REP (TIMERBAEV) TENTATIVELY SUGGESTED THERE MIGHT BE A NUMBER OF SEPARATE SUB-GROUPS WORKING ON DIFFERENT ISSUES BUT GENERALLY MADE CLEAR HE WOULD BE RESERVING FURTHER COMMENT UNTIL A LATER MEETING.

3. IN ADDITION TO DISCUSSING QUESTION OF PRIORITIES, THE THREE DELS CONSIDERED POSSIBLE BREAKDOWNS OF CTB ISSUES AS BETWEEN POLITICAL AND TECHNICAL GROUPS AND SUBGROUPS. MOST OF DISCUSSION WAS BASED ON SUBJECTS AS BROKEN DOWN IN US DECEMBER 7 WORKING PAPER. IT WAS DECIDED NEXT MEETING OF POLITICAL WORKING GROUP WOULD BE HELD SOMETIME AFTER RESTRICTED MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 2.
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